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Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

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Committee against Torture
Sixty-third session

Summary record of the first part (public)* of the 1615th meeting
Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on, Monday, 23 April 2018, at 10 a.m.

Temporary Chair: Ms. Andrijasevic-Boko (Representative of the Secretary-General)
Chair: Mr. Modvig

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* The summary record of the second part (closed) of the meeting appears as document CAT/C/SR.1615/Add.1.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Opening of the session

1. **The Temporary Chair** declared open the sixty-third session of the Committee against Torture and welcomed the three new members of the Committee.

2. Noting that 2018 marked the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, she said that challenges remained to be overcome in the achievement of the objectives of the Declaration, as had been highlighted by the Secretary-General in his statement at the thirty-seventh session of the Human Rights Council. The Secretary-General's Human Rights Up Front initiative was therefore all the more important.

3. The Organizational Management Plan for 2018–2021 developed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) placed great importance on national implementation of the recommendations issued by human rights mechanisms, including treaty bodies. Technical cooperation was a key component in supporting States in that process and in reinforcing synergies with the Sustainable Development Goals. Human rights mechanisms, including the Committee against Torture, had an important role to play in providing early-warning indicators of human rights violations that could lead to violence or conflict.

4. During the seventy-second session of the General Assembly, the Member States had taken a number of decisions that would affect the allocation of operational and financial resources to the treaty bodies; those decisions included the reduction of travel expenses for experts and staff by 25 per cent and 10 per cent respectively and the approval of only 5 of the 11 additional posts requested by OHCHR. The Office remained committed to providing high-quality support to the treaty bodies and was seeking ways to address, in particular, the insufficient resources available to the Committee for its work on individual complaints submitted under article 22 of the Convention. Despite the constraints, the Committee had nevertheless succeeded in achieving its target of taking final decisions on 64 individual complaints each year. Its adoption of general comment No. 4 on the implementation of article 3 of the Convention in the context of article 22 would facilitate the creation of jurisprudence on the principle of non-refoulement, which continued to be one of the main subjects of individual complaints.

Declaration by the newly elected members of the Committee

5. *Mr. Rodríguez-Pinzón, Mr. Tuzmukhamedov and Ms. Zhang made the solemn declaration provided for in rule 14 of the Committee's rules of procedure.*

Election of the officers of the Committee

6. **The Temporary Chair** invited nominations for the office of Chair.

7. **Ms. Gaer** nominated Mr. Modvig for the office of Chair.

8. *Mr. Modvig was elected Chair by acclamation.*

9. *Mr. Modvig took the Chair.*

10. **The Chair** suggested that the meeting should be suspended to allow the members to consult each other before electing the other officers.

The meeting was suspended at 10.30 a.m. and resumed at 10.45 a.m.

11. **The Chair** invited nominations for the three offices of Vice-Chair.

12. **Mr. Rodríguez-Pinzón** nominated Mr. Heller Rouassant.

13. **Ms. Belmir** nominated Ms. Gaer.

14. **Ms. Racu** nominated Ms. Belmir.

15. *Ms. Belmir, Ms. Gaer and Mr. Heller Rouassant were elected Vice-Chairs by acclamation.*

16. **The Chair** invited nominations for the office of Rapporteur.

17. **Mr. Heller Rouassant** nominated Mr. Touzé.

18. *Mr. Touzé was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.*

Adoption of the agenda (CAT/C/63/1)

19. *The agenda was adopted.*

Organizational and other matters

20. **Mr. Hani** said that it would be useful to schedule a meeting with the secretariat during the current session in order to discuss the impact the operational and financial decisions taken by the Member States during the seventy-second session of the General Assembly might have on the Committee's future work.

The public part of the meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.